

# MASSACHUSETTS FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

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January 2012



***COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS***  
***FIRE SERVICE COMMISSION***  
**FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM**

## MASSACHUSETTS FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

The Fire Service Commission has identified the need to further enhance the professionalism of Fire Chiefs throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by the establishment of a uniform credentialing program. The goal of the program is to ensure a strong degree of accountability and to provide that as many fire chiefs as possible can be involved in this process. The Credentialing Program sets forth the goals needed for fire chiefs to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities to be fire chiefs in Massachusetts. It establishes a higher degree of professionalism so that chiefs may be better prepared to serve their department, their community and other organizations. The goal is to promote the professional development of the fire chief in Massachusetts and to assist these chiefs in their daily operations, including the management of large-scale incidents. Credentialed participants will be required to renew their credentials every three years.

The Fire Service Commission, through this program, has attempted to establish occupational education, fire service related training, and experience criteria relevant to the position of fire chief. This process provides an equal opportunity for the volunteer, call, or full-time fire chief to meet the minimum criteria for achieving the fire chief credentialing.

This program is not associated with the certification process established by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.

By participation in this program, an applicant agrees to abide by a Mission Statement and Code of Professional Conduct.

The credentialing process will be solely administered by the Massachusetts Fire Service Commission.

### **What is required for credentialing?** (see check off list on page 10)

1. Candidate's Letter of Introduction
2. Professional References with Letters, minimum of (2) required (to be included with submission of application package)
3. Candidate's Credentialing Application Package
4. Candidate's Signed Statement of Application (see page 11)
5. Score Sheet
6. Certificates and Proof of Points Applied For
7. Must be a member in good standing of a Fire Department or Fire District

***Mission Statement of Credentialed Massachusetts Fire Chiefs***

*Our mission is to provide effective leadership to the fire and emergency services of the Commonwealth.*

***FIRE CHIEF'S CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT***

A key value within the fire and emergency service is strong, ethical and competent leadership. Most professionals abide by a Code of Ethics or Code of Conduct, which expresses their understanding of what constitutes acceptable behavior.

Abiding by these standards is required for continued recognition as a designated Fire Chief and serves notice to the public who entrust their confidence in the abilities and integrity of the Fire Chief. It is meant to foster the need for our fire chiefs to follow these codes in their daily professions as well as in their daily lives.

**SECTION 1**

We shall be dedicated to the concepts of effective fire protection by responsible fire chiefs and we believe that professional management is essential to the achievement of this objective. We pledge ourselves to advance the science of fire service through training courses and other methods to meet the proper requirements of our profession.

**SECTION 2**

We recognize that the most important function of local fire departments is to serve the best interests of the community.

**SECTION 3**

We shall be dedicated to the highest ideals of personal character, honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that fire chiefs may merit the respect and confidence of the community.

**SECTION 4**

We shall refrain from participating in political activities which may impair our performance as professional administrators.

**SECTION 5**

We shall handle all matters in our best judgment so that fairness and impartiality govern our decisions.

**SECTION 6**

We shall observe all of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and all applicable local statutes.

**SECTION 7**

We shall make known the risks to be anticipated, should the fire chief's professional recommendations be disregarded by others.

**SECTION 8**

We shall recognize the professional competence and the mutual dependence of all fire chiefs and we pledge cooperation to those professionals and agencies concerned with the improvement of fire protection.

## MASSACHUSETTS FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

### Guidance for completion of credentialing application

#### **WORK HISTORY/EXPERIENCE**

**Experience: 1 point for each year served– Maximum of 20 points.** The candidate must be a member in good standing of a Fire Department or Fire District. Time served on fire departments other than Massachusetts municipal departments will be counted.

You must provide the commission with proof that you are a member in good standing. You must provide dated appointment cards, Fire Department Identification Cards, or a letter from the appointing authority including but not limited to the Town Manager, Town Administrator, Selectman, Mayor, or Supervisor showing the dates served.

**Fire Officer Experience: 2 points per year, Maximum of 10 points.** You must provide dated appointment cards, Fire Department Identification Cards, or a letter from the appointing authority including but not limited to the Town Manager, Town Administrator, Selectman, Mayor, or Supervisor showing the dates served as an officer.

A resume of your fire service is also required. It should show appointment dates, departments served, and ranks attained.

#### **FORMAL EDUCATION**

Minimum of a High School Diploma or GED required. A copy of the Diploma/certificate is required (*please complete the information on page 11 if you are not able to obtain a copy of your diploma*).

College degrees can be in any subject for credit. A copy of the degree or certificate is required. No credit for partial completion of degree requirements will be awarded. All degrees or course work must be from an accredited college or university.

#### **Formal Education: – Max. Points 20**

1. College certificate = 3 pts.
2. Associates Degree = 5 pts.
3. Bachelors Degree = 10 pts.
4. Masters Degree = 15 pts.
5. Doctorate PhD = 20 pts.

Note: Only 1 point value may be selected.

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**FIRE CERTIFICATIONS AND EXAMINATIONS**

Applicants must provide proof of Certification for recognized fire related fields. Certifications can be issued by Federal, State, NFPA, or other entity recognized by the commission.

**Fire Certifications/Fire Examinations: (highest level attained) Max. Points 20**

1. Fire Officer I or Fire Lieutenant Exam = 5 pts.
2. Fire Officer II or Fire Captain Exam = 10 pts.
3. Fire Officer III or Deputy/District/Assistant Chief Exam = 15 pts.
4. Fire Officer IV or Chief of Department Exam= 20 pts. **(Select only one level)**

Credit for fire examinations will only be awarded if a passing score is achieved. Full point credit assumes examinations were administered by the Massachusetts Human Resources Division. The commission will consider examinations conducted by other entities on an individual basis.

**Other Certifications: (highest level attained, but not necessarily maintained) Max. Points 15**

1. Hazardous Materials – Operational = 5 pts.
2. Hazardous Material – Technician = 10 pts.
3. EMT-Basic = 5 pts.
4. EMT-Intermediate = 10 pts.
5. EMT-Paramedic = 15 pts.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Certificates of attendance or completion for all courses to be credited must be provided for examination. A transcript, syllabus or course outline should also be included and in the case where no certificates are given these items alone will also be considered as the necessary documentation for credit when distributed by the course provider or instructor. All attended courses or seminars must be associated with fire service activities, functions or organizations.

These certificates may come from many places that provide professional development for the fire service and emergency medical services. They may come from accredited colleges or universities (*if not counted in a degree for which you have previously received points*), fire attack schools, weekend seminars or workshops, Massachusetts Firefighting Academy courses, National Fire Academy courses or weekends, chiefs' conferences, vendor courses, and other learning institutions.

**Certificate or other proof (outline/summary)-Maximum of 20 points**

National Fire Academy = 2 pts. for each 6 hrs. or 1 day course

Mass. Firefighting Academy Course; Other Courses / In-house training = 1 pt. for each 6 hrs. or 1 day course or 0.5 pts. for each 3 hr. night / program

(In house training requires a course outline or OEMS credits for approval)

**ACTIVE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP: 1 point per Association – Maximum of 5 points**

Only active membership in fire, rescue, or emergency management organizations will be accepted. Local, county, state, regional, and international organizations are accepted. Examples are the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts, New England Association of Fire Chiefs, International Association of Arson Investigators, NFPA and District Organizations.

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The applicant must provide copies of membership cards, letters acknowledging acceptance of membership, or other proof. The applicant must be a member for at least one year prior to the date of application.

**CREDENTIALING SUMMARY**

50 Points are needed to become credentialed.

**Continuing Education Requirements: 72 hours during each consecutive 3-year period**

The Continuing Education component is designed to encourage that new achievement is made during each consecutive 3-year period. This may also include remaining current and active with organizations and committees and by keeping your certifications current, if they require a continuing education program to do so. The goal is to assist the credentialed Fire Chief in maintaining a higher level of professionalism within the fire service after initial credentialing.

## MASSACHUSETTS FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

### CREDENTIALING CRITERIA

**Experience:** Years of Service in Fire Service – 1 point per year – **Max. Points 20**

**Fire Officer Experience:** Years as Fire Officer – 2 points per year – **Max. Points 10**

**Formal Education:** Post High School Education. – **Max. Points 20**

1. College certificate = 3 pts.
2. Associates Degree = 5 pts.
3. Bachelors Degree = 10 pts.
4. Masters Degree = 15 pts.
5. Doctorate PhD = 20 pts.

**Fire Certifications/Exams: Max. Points 20**

1. Fire Officer I or Fire Lieutenant Exam = 5 pts.
2. Fire Officer II or Fire Captain Exam = 10 pts.
3. Fire Officer III or Deputy/District/Assistant Chief Exam = 15 pts.
4. Fire Officer IV or Chief of Department Exam = 20 pts.

**Other Certifications: Max. Points 15**

1. Hazardous Materials – Operational = 5 pts.
2. Hazardous Materials – Technician = 10 pts.
3. EMT-Basic = 5 pts.
4. EMT-Intermediate = 10 pts.
5. EMT-Paramedic = 15 pts.

**Professional Development:** Certificate or other proof (outline/summary)-**Max. Points 20**

Mass. Firefighting Academy Course, Other Courses / In-house training = 1 pt. for each 6 hrs. or 1 day course or 0.5 pts. for each 3 hr. night / program

National Fire Academy = 2 pts. for each 6 hrs. or 1 day course

**Active Fire Association Membership:** 1 point per Association – **Max. Points 5**

*Examples but not limited to: Assoc. Memberships and/or having served as officers, boards, other committees (FCAM, IAFC, NEFC, MCFC, Task forces) etc.*

**The Massachusetts HRD “Chief of Department” or an equivalent exam with a passing score will be considered when requesting the 20 points in the Fire Officer IV or Chief of Department exam.**

**FIRE CHIEF CREDENTIALING PROGRAM**

**50 POINTS REQUIRED FOR CREDENTIALING**

**SCORE SHEET**

\_\_\_\_\_ **WORK HISTORY/EXPERIENCE** (*Max. 20 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **FIRE OFFICER EXPERIENCE** (*Max. 10 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **FORMAL EDUCATION** (*Max. 20 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **FIRE CERTIFICATIONS/EXAMS** (*Max. 20 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **OTHER CERTIFICATIONS** (*Max. 15 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** (*Max. 20 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **ACTIVE FIRE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS** (*Max. 5 pts.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL POINTS**

**Reviewer Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



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**PERSONAL REFERENCE SHEET**

Candidates must submit the names of two references and information on these references.

Examples of both qualifying and non-qualifying references:

- **Qualifying References**
  - A past supervisor (within 5 years)
  - Local, state, or federal officials or department heads
  - Emergency services organization officials (public, private, military, etc.)
- **References that do not qualify**
  - A subordinate
  - A former student
  - Friends, neighbors or relatives

Letters from references are required and must be signed by the person and attached to the application.

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**Reference #1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Association: \_\_\_\_\_ Years of association: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *Letter of reference received*

**Reference #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Association: \_\_\_\_\_ Years of association: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ *Letter of reference received*

**REQUIREMENT CHECK OFF LIST**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Firefighter/Fire Officer Experience  
Provide dated appointment cards, fire department identification cards, or a letter from the appointing authority including but not limited to the town manager, town administrator, selectman, mayor, or supervisor showing the dates served
- \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate's letter of introduction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Resume of fire service experience
- \_\_\_\_\_ Professional references with letters, minimum of 2 required and to be included in application package
- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed score sheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certificates and proof of points applied for
- \_\_\_\_\_ Must be a member in good standing of a fire department or fire district

## APPLICATION FOR CREDENTIALING

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Years in current position: \_\_\_\_\_

***If you were not able to obtain and include a copy of your high school diploma, please fill out the following:***

***Name/Address of High School graduated from:*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Year of Graduation:*** \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that credentialing is subject to the approval of the Fire Service Commission. I will execute the necessary documents and supply further information as determined by the committee. I understand that any false statements or misrepresentation submitted in the course of these proceedings may result in the revocation of any credentialing.

I give permission for verification of any information provided in this application package.

Candidate's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Steele at 978-567-3118 or [Barbara.steele@state.ma.us](mailto:Barbara.steele@state.ma.us).*

***Credentialing will be for a three-year period and requires 72 hours of continuing education during each consecutive 3-year period.***

**Mail one copy of the completed application package to:**

**Ms. Barbara H. Steele  
Massachusetts Fire Service Commission  
P. O. Box 1025  
Stow, MA 01775**